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IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND



# IN THE BRAHMANS' . HOLY LAND

*A RECORD OF SERVICE IN THE MYSORE*

BY  
BENJAMIN ROBINSON

WITH FOREWORD BY  
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London  
CHARLES H. KELLY  
25-35 CITY ROAD, AND 26 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

*First Edition, 1912*

TO  
*ALL WHO LOVE MANKIND*





## FOREWORD

I RESPOND very willingly to the Author's request that I should write a brief introduction to his book. It was my privilege to know Mr. Robinson during the whole of his time in India. No man ever flung himself with greater zest and determination into the life, language, and thought of the people among whom he was appointed to labour. From the first India cast its spell over him in an extraordinary degree. Its languages were a challenge in which he delighted. He spared no labour, he shirked no difficulty. Root, stem, idiom—they were there to be mastered, and it was with him a point of honour, as well as a matter of desire, to master them. The philosophies of India received from him minute attention ; critical always, but always

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reverent and sympathetic. Especially did the brooding mysticism of the East make congenial appeal to him. He gave it free but discriminating access to his deepest nature, until he became saturated with it. Recognizing deep differences between himself and the people of his adoption and his love, he nevertheless discovered real and fundamental kinship. Thus it was easy for him to move about among them in kindly, sympathetic fashion. He put on no airs, he claimed no privilege as one of the conquering race. Everywhere he was the brother of the people, the friend who counts it his first privilege to help, the patient, modest teacher whose method it was to suggest and educe rather than dogmatically to affirm. So it became a passion with him to break down barriers, to reconcile differences, and to embody in his life the spirit of a true fraternity.

It was in this way that the Author came

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to make the experiment of which, in part, this book is the story. The idea was not new. Other men, one here and another there, had in their degree made the attempt. But the general missionary judgement and practice in India were, and are, otherwise. Not with a desire to discount that judgement, and still less with a desire to be singular, did Mr. Robinson enter upon his path. But he was willing to do anything possible that might truly bridge the distance between himself and his people; and he thought he was in a singularly favourable position for making this particular attempt. No man ever adventured himself on an enterprise moved by more self-forgetting chivalry or truer Christian compassion. How it began, how proceeded, and how ended—it is all written in this book. Suffice for me to say that it proved a costly experiment. It not only compelled his return to England utterly broken in

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health, but its results have pursued him all through his ministry. They still abide, and it was during a recent period of enforced absence from regular ministerial work that this book was written.

For many years there was a hope that Mr. Robinson would give to the public the benefit of his experiences and reflections. I have myself repeatedly urged upon him the desirability of doing this. He shrank greatly from it; and when one reads the intimate narrative now at last made public, the shrinking is easily intelligible. The story seems to lay bare the deep inner workings of a consecrated soul, and it will be read, I am sure, with reverence, as well as with interest and profit.

But the 'experiment' is only a part of the book, which throws many an instructive sidelight on Indian life and literature, as also on missionary problems and methods. I hope the book will be widely read. It

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ought to kindle the imagination and stir the heart of the Church, and make the great missionary question at once more real and more urgent to all who call Christ Lord. The atmosphere of the book is as truly Indian as it is Christian. Its story was begotten in love, and continued in suffering. This Author, at any rate, has not 'loved' his life, but for Christ's sake and the Gospel's has 'lost' it. But he has 'kept' it, too, in the hearts and lives of many in India with whom he came into such close and loving touch. I trust that now, through this volume, the perfume of his broken box of ointment may spread to many other lives.

HENRY HAIGH.



# I

Awe striking terror, vortex vast,  
Life's whirl must predetermine Caste,  
From highest God to lowest germ,  
The God have worship, writhe the worm.

THE goodness of King Shibi breathed **Good**  
fragrance through the three worlds. **King**  
The Gods Indra and Agni resolved **Shibi**  
to test his devotion. Indra became a  
hawk, Agni a dove. Pursued by the hawk,  
the dove fled to the king, sheltered behind  
him, and craved his protection. He pro-  
mised that he would give his own life  
rather than give it up to death. As he  
was speaking, the hawk claimed that the  
dove was created on purpose for his food,  
and belonged to him of divine right. The  
king said, ' It is your bounden duty, your  
lawful right and virtue to slay and eat,  
but I have given my word to this dove ;



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cannot you seek some other and be happy ? ’

‘ No,’ said the hawk, ‘ none is so sweet as that, and unless you give me an equal weight from your own royal person, I will not forgo my right.’ ‘ Very good,’ said Shibi. Scales were ordered, the dove put into one, flesh cut from the king’s own body in the other, but they could not outweigh the dove. Shibi placed his head to the sword. Then Indra and Agni flamed forth in their divine splendour, and set the seal of their blessing on his true devotion.

**Birth-condition and Life-function** So I read in early Kanarese studies, and pondered. Is the dove created on purpose to be food for the hawk ? Is it the hawk’s bounden duty, its lawful right and its virtue to slay, to eat ? Does the birth-condition determine the life-function ? Is the being of gods and kings so determined ? Does Caste mean birth-condition, which determines the custom, and the right, of men

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inevitably ? Is Caste as divinely ordained as the right of the hawk to slay and eat ? The divine law teaches that the vast vortex of created life, which is terrible beyond words, and ever passes through becoming, growth, and death, includes all—from Brahmā, the highest Divinity, down to the lowest plant-germs. The Most Glorious, who is above speech and thought, for the sake of preserving all this creation ordained distinctive duties for those who sprang from His mouth, arm, thigh, and foot. The deeds of men that spring from mind, or voice, or body bear fruit of bliss or woe. Through faulty deeds of the body man reaches plants, through those of the voice birds or wild animals, through those of the mind low birth-condition. If goodness constitute the chief element of being, Divinity is reached ; if passion, manhood ; if darkness, animal forms.

I read such words. Something of their

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**Padre's** meaning dawned upon me. I had  
**Caste** thought of universal right binding upon all men, eternal and unchangeable in principle. Pure, sober, kindly, godly lives would surely witness that to every Kanarese man. A friend, an Assistant-Commissioner in Mysore, told me that one night when camped out, as he sat in his tent he heard the Kanarese men outside say, 'This Sahib doesn't say —, doesn't drink brandy; what can he be?' One deep-thoughted man solved it by saying, 'Why this Sahib must belong to the Missionary Caste.'

**Religion,** The Lingayats are bearers of the  
**not Caste** Linga, the god Siva's most sacred symbol, on their breasts. By Brāhmans they are counted heretics. Once their faith was the State religion of Mysore. Talking with one of their spiritual directors (Guru) in the courts of a temple, I asked him whether, if I wished to become his disciple,



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he could teach me, and on what conditions could I be received into their community. He said, 'If you complied with our conditions, received our teaching, and after probation were approved, we could receive you into our religion (our system of religious thought), but into our Caste—never; that is impossible.' As he used the word 'jāti'—which we render Caste, the constitution with which and the condition into which one is born—he spoke with reverent awe and a depth of meaning I could not then fathom. The meaning and mystery of Caste began to unfold.

Often Brāhmans are grouped together as one Caste. In Mysore there are three great series of Castes among them. The 'Smārtas,' followers of the sacred 'Smṛiti,' the traditional interpretation of Scripture, worship Siva. In religious thought they are Advaitins (*i.e.* Non-dualists), holding that the only real

Number-  
less  
Castes

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substance is one, alone ; all that appears is in truth only seeming. They bear three white ashen marks drawn horizontally through a round spot on the forehead, across each breast, and three times on each arm. The ' Mādhavas,' who are followers of Madhvāchārya, taught exactly the opposite. They are ' Dvaitas,' or Dualists, and maintain the eternal difference of finite selves from Vishnu, the great Creator, whom they worship as Supreme. They bear a vertical black mark drawn through a black, round spot above the nose, and the seal of Vishnu on forehead, breast, and arms. The ' Srivaishnavas ' bear the trident in the middle of the forehead, the centre line red, and the two outer ones white. They worship Vishnu, and in religious thought are ' Modified Non-dualists,' holding that the distinction of Creator and Created must subsist eternally, excepting that finite selves may gain closest unity with the Divine.

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The facial expression and bearing of each of these three Castes is as different from each other as their Caste-marks and religious systems of thought. A Smārta friend once said to me that the Mādhavas worshipped Hanu-manta, the monkey-god, until they became monkey-headed; that they insisted on Duality until it developed self-assertion to excess, while his own Non-dual system led to a truer sense of proportion as to the relative value of the individual ego. My teacher was a Srivaishnava, who bore the honorific title, 'Ayyangāra.' I had a friend who was called a Srivaishnava, wore the same Caste-marks, and bore the priestly title 'Achārya.' In the course of our study the differences of Caste among Brāhmans was suggested. I said, 'Is not — Achārya one of your own Caste?' 'Certainly not,' he said; 'for the sake of influence and position we should pay



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deference to him, but really we could not own him as of our Caste.' So one began to learn that each of the three great Castes of Brāhmans was divided into many Castes which could not become one.

**Brāhman**      The Brāhman's birth is the ever-  
**Ideals**      during essential form of 'Dharma'—duty, right, virtue. He is born for the sake of Dharma, and exists for the Divine Scripture. His heart is the home of prayer. He is guardian of the Scripture, and of its sacred powers; he alone can lead to the highest. That ideal has been written into the very life-texture of the worthy Brāhman. Wide and deep as are the differences among themselves, the difference between them and all other Castes is far wider and deeper. I have seen a Brāhman woman, scowling, hiss a lad of another Caste away from her, so that he should not come within the proscribed distance, and his presence defile. An outcaste coming along a public

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bridge saw a Brāhman coming from the other end of the bridge ; he turned back, and went off the road, lest in crossing the bridge he should come within defiling distance.

The other Castes, Heretics, and Outcastes, baffled and bewildered me by their number and deep differences. Each is a complex series of Castes which cannot become one. Each insists upon its own Caste-rights as divine and unalterable for all within its circle. The unclean Outcastes—who must live apart, outside town or village—would no more tolerate the presence of a Brāhman in their parts than a Brāhman would tolerate them in a Brāhman street.

But the differences between the Castes themselves seemed to me then little compared with the gulf between them all and myself. With all my heart I wished to be helpful to every

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one, and, if it might be, lead them to the truest manhood and to God. Every day one saw the gulf deepen, broaden. Once, before daybreak, I lay down on a flat rock overlooking Gersoppa Falls. Spray and mist arose from the depths, I could not see the bottom, and shuddering 'terror seized me. As day dawned, I saw into the depths, and the awful rocks of the vast chasm grew clear. Then I toiled down the steep cliffs nearly to the lower water-bed. As I looked upward and around, the whole scene, so far above words, seemed to possess me.

**Yediyuru** So, and yet much more, seemed  
**Jatre, i.e.** the vasty deep between the Castes  
**Festival** and myself. In the beginning of my second year I spent two days at the Lingāyat temple festival at Yediyuru. Ten thousand worshippers came together. Men lying on beds of sharp thorns, men with their heads<sup>•</sup> buried in the ground; Vaishnava priests with gong and shell of madden-

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ing din ; 'shepherd priests' with bearskin garb ; men and women prostrating themselves in the dust for a full half-mile to the river, bathing, then returning to the temple, every step a prostration, to present their hair as an offering to their god—these and many other weird sights live in my memory still. We kept on teaching and talking as we could in the ceaseless noise of the crowd until late at night. The moonlight was like milk poured on the ground. I left the crowd, and went to the travellers' rest-house near by for the night. But not to sleep. The sounds of the festival kept alive in me all the scenes of the day. From the shouts of ten thousand throats when the ponderous sacred car began to creak and sway and move, to the talk of the man who asked me if I could defy gravitation by my spirit-force—it was all there. How far away the people in spirit ! It was as if every conversation only made one feel the depths

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between us more and more. The next night I rode home alone. Between snatches of sleep the whole scene was still with me, seemingly more vivid than in the daylight. Could I by any wise means get near to the heart of my brothers, so that one's life might help them to feel the meaning of a Common Father's love? That became thenceforward the question of my life.

That leads to another question.

**Conquer-  
ing Race**

Are the manners and bearing of a ruling race, the power to command, with all the deep and subtle influence which that exerts upon personality, helpful to one who wishes to lead men, so different from himself, into the fellowship of the meek and lowly One? I remembered what He said of the rulers who lord it over their subjects. 'Ye shall not be so,' 'I came not to receive but to render service,' 'Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.' Such words grew in power within me till

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I could only wrestle in prayer for grace to obey. The John Bull within me urged, 'Have not you the same right to your birth-constitution and condition as they to theirs?' But there was ever present within me One Presence. I could see no form, but I felt somehow wound into me the life-and-death meaning of His meekness, His Cross.

A Lingāyat priest came to my study. We had a long talk on 'Leather' religion. Then he said, 'Would you please let me see your sacred book?' I handed a Bible to him. He shrank back in horror such as I never knew before, and gasping, said, 'Charīna' (leather). All unwittingly, I had offered him a leather-bound Bible. To him to touch leather was the most unthinkable and defiling abomination. I could have sunk into the earth for shame, and earnestly besought him to pardon me, and believe that I did it in

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ignorance, not with intent to defile. But the question then came thus—What if I, myself and my mode of life be as abominable to those whom I wish to teach and help as the leather to the Lingāyat? I wished to hand him the Word of God, and it was bound in an abomination that he could not come near. The choking answer came—Eating flesh, especially beef, is more abominable still. At another festival we were waiting aside until the excitement of the crowd at the presence of the god in his palanquin had ceased. A man sitting near us, who had listened to our preaching, said to me, ‘How can you expect your teaching to have any effect when you yourself disobey your own Scripture?’ ‘How so?’ I said. ‘Your Scripture says, “Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground,” and you enter your temple with boots on.’ I was startled again. Such direct criticism

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was sharp, if healing, and I was compelled to question deeper still—How far does my life defile Christ's message ?

Whatever differences may exist between Brāhmans and all who <sup>Flesh for Food</sup> acknowledge their sacred position, or between them and Lingāyats and Jains, all are agreed that to take life for food is the greatest sin of all sins, and that to slay the bullock for food the most grievous of all deadly sins. The unbeginning past of life determines the present sheath of life, but all life is essentially the same. Trees and plants are conscious life. A man will not cut down a tree without worship, sometimes will defer cutting for months lest if cut down untimely, the life hurt there should bring harm to his own home. But the reverence for the bull and the cow cannot be expressed. Slaughter of cows is worse even than slaughter of Brāhmans, divine as they are. The bull is sacred to Siva, and



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even among the worshippers of Vishnu there is the same deep reverence for the cow.. Thus it is that the deepest and most sacred religious feeling of all those Castes is outraged by eating beef. The Jain will not eat food by oil-light, lest insects or flies should burn in its flame. To tread upon ant or creeping thing is a serious sin.

**Must flesh food be given up?** It was clear to me, then, that one could not adopt the custom or dress of every Caste; they were too many, various, and contradictory. It seemed doubtful if any custom or any dress could be adopted in its entirety. But as I learned and felt how abominable leather was, and how sacrilegious flesh-eating was, the question was narrowed to—Is it my duty to give up eating flesh-meat entirely, and to wear the cotton waist-cloth and sandals? Will the avoiding of those things that plainly outrage sacred feelings help me better to commend my message as a

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minister of Christ? I read the Abbé Dubois' account of his experiment in that direction. It was clear that, for whatever reason, he gained great influence ; but after thirty years' service, he said he did not think it possible for a Hindu to become a true Christian ! His example had been before our own missionaries in the Mysore for fifty years. Many of them must have thought through the same question, but no one of them, so far as I knew, had tried to live on the food of Kanarese men, or wear any form of un-English dress. The sincerity and devotion of many of these men claimed and received my reverence. Was it wise or respectful for me to do what such devoted men, after mature knowledge and thought, had quite deliberately declined to do ? Was it not, rather, an impertinence to adopt a form of life which would single me out from a brotherhood of which I was, and wished to be, a loyal member ? I knew

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that, for many, considerations of health made any such experiment undesirable, if not absolutely impossible. I consulted my Chairman, whose memory I revere. He would not forbid it, as I felt so strongly ; but he could not advise it, alike on account of the risk to health, and because he was doubtful if it would be of such service as I thought. I fully appreciated the risk to health, and I shrank from singularity in dress, and from all that it involved. I had no wish to be rash, or to earn any sort of notoriety, and I weighed carefully everything that was said to me. But in the end I could not either stifle or banish the conviction that I ought to change my dress, and to live without flesh food.

During the remainder of that **Preparing** year I gradually lessened the amount of flesh food, so as to avoid any risk from sudden change. The next year I was appointed to Gubbi, where Thomas

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Hodson began our mission to the Kanarese people, and where William Arthur lived. To me it was sacred ground. I was there alone, with a Kanarese evangelist. Our first Kanarese mission station was then, and, until recently, a serious problem. The apparent results of so much devoted toil were meagre and unsatisfactory. I could not expect that where so much earnest labour had produced no higher spiritual results, anything I could do would be of more effect. Yet I longed intensely to reach and win the hearts of men for Christ. By day or night that desire never ceased its persistent pressure. Those lonely nights banished sleep. Sometimes the sainted dead, the men who began there without a hymn, without a convert for years, seemed to make their presence felt. Then the tens of thousands around, whose need was so deep and sore, crowded upon my thought. Could I cross the gulf, down its rugged

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steep, through its rocky torrent, and up the other side ? I thought all through as sanely as I could, and felt I must try ; I could not help it, I could do no other. So far as I know, I thought and acted sincerely, and with true-hearted devotion, wishing only to be the servant of the meek and lowly Lord in the service of men. In that spirit, I vowed, ' I will.'





## II

Give self to learn thought-baffling thought,  
Search all Caste's subtle source has wrought.

I HAD as colleague at Gubbi a trusted Kanarese evangelist, John <sup>Gubbi</sup> Mark. I told him my purpose. He demurred. ' No one else had tried to do this : if my health failed, might not the Synod blame him ? ' In such ways he set all the reasons he could against my proposal, with an earnestness I could not then understand. I told him I had thought it all through. When at last he reluctantly assented, I asked him to buy me several loin-cloths, such as are ordinarily worn, and a pair of sandals ; to engage a bullock cart from one of our young Christian farmers, and an orphan boy to go with him to cook for him such food—excepting only flesh—as he would eat



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himself, and which I would share. We then arranged a tour of about six weeks, through villages away from the main roads, where missionary or evangelist seldom went.

**Travel-** We had with us a small tent, a  
**ling** few books, and as few other things  
**Method** as could be. No chair or table, no crockery or cutlery, just a bell-metal vessel or two for use at meals. I hoped it would be possible after inuring myself in this way to the simplest life, thereafter to visit villages to teach and help without carrying any luggage whatever. Ordinarily we pitched our tent only on a Saturday, so as to have quiet and retirement for worship and prayers. On other nights we usually slept on the ground. We arose before day-break, and arranged where the cart should go, so that we might join it at noon. Then we set forth, calling at all the villages we came to, teaching and talking as we found opportunity. Having reached our cart,

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we dined under such shade as could be found, studied till about three o'clock, dispatched the cart to the next place, and visited more villages. After reaching our appointed rendezvous, we had the evening meal, and then flung ourselves on the ground, in the hope that, as the Kanarese say, sleep would come to us. The sun soon blistered, skinned, and then tanned my exposed limbs. First attempts at walking barefoot were very painful, especially on broken quartz ; but I persevered until I was able to walk fourteen miles before breakfast without hurt. I fear I shrank from the curious, challenging gaze of the people, and from their comments—loud and sometimes rude—about an English missionary walking thus. I practised eating with my fingers, until I could do it dexterously, shooting the rice into the mouth without missing a grain. It was harder learning to drink respectably, that is, to convey the water to one's mouth in

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a steady stream without letting the vessel touch one's lips. How constantly and humiliatingly it *would* gurgle back through my nostrils ! I never saw bread or tea, or any form of English food during those weeks. At first rice or rāgi (millet) and vegetable curry did not seem unpalatable as prepared in the Kanarese way ; but after a while visions of bread-and-butter kept returning to tantalize me.

After about a month, when the  
**Testing** sun burned fiercer every day and the baked ground relentlessly flung back its waxing heat every night, I was tempted sorely to question if it were worth while, and if it could be endured. I had feared lest the constant exposure to the glare would hurt my eyes. Happily, they grew accustomed to the blazing light and heat. The internal organs did not grow accustomed to the food. Once we had had a long forenoon walk, and taught in several

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villages. There were but few trees near our resting-place, and they cast but poor shade. I sat under one of them, tired and worn. As I thought of the food that was coming, everything within me revolted against it, and there came such a sense of nausea as I hope never to know again. A dry crust would have been bread from heaven to me then. How to conceal what I felt, and make pretence to eat, I did not know. At first it seemed as if I could not face the walk and work we had planned for the evening. Will conquered feeling, however, and I ate—how I know not, but I hope without sign to my companion of the awful revolt within. At three o'clock we started for our six-mile walk and teaching. Many times I had to fight against such inward revolt, but it never really became a hurtless task.

Several times during our journey people offered us food. I had thought and

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**Hospital-  
ity** hoped perchance they might allow us to eat in their homes, but that was never suggested. Once a clean outer room was offered us, in which to eat the food given to us, but it was never even supposed they or we could think of anything other than eating apart and out of sight. Once a cool place near a stream was pointed out to us as a convenient place to eat some plantains given to us. I learnt during those weeks, as I could not have learnt otherwise, the sacredness of food to the Brāhman and others. A meal is a sacrifice in the most sacred sense. Food must only be eaten when ceremonially purified, with the whole self centred in the Divine. Food itself must ever be worshipped. The sight of my eyes falling upon a Brāhman's food would defile it. A grain of rice touching the lips and falling back would defile the rest. I saw a Brāhman purified for the noon meal. We talked about the Scripture

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for some time, but at such a distance that he should not be defiled. Once a Brāhman was speaking to me about the necessity of a good understanding between Briton and Brāhman. I said I wished it were possible that we could have social intercourse at table. His emphatic, 'That could never be—impossible!' taught me that even the thought of such intercourse created horror. This truth I gained, that food is a family sacrifice, to which birth alone gives right of place, and that however I dressed, or whatever I ate, I could not in this life gain that birthright.

A little of the meaning of the life of Kanarese villages entered into me deeply then. The condition of the children appeared to me pitiable—irresponsible in their seemingly almost wild freedom, yet bound by Caste without hope of freedom from that. In many villages there was a most urgent appeal for a school.

**Village  
Life**

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They had no money, but would give grain to the teachers. How often I was grieved by refusing, because we had no money for more schools ! An absolute sense of unalterable destiny rules their thought. To every appeal to arouse themselves towards a better manhood, there was one answer, ' Such life is for you, but it is written on our foreheads that we must scratch the ground and live on such grain as we can grow.' Sometimes I used to think they were simply trying to evade the appeal out of lazy acquiescence in their condition, and because they did not wish to be troubled to make any upward effort. I think now it was rather the sense of the binding duty of reverence for the ancestral customs into which they were born, and of awe in the presence of divine destiny working through all the past in determining the present.

Some of the marriage ceremonies which I saw, and where I received the betel given

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to the guests on arriving, were **Marriage**  
deeply interesting, but when I asked **Ceremon-**  
the meaning of any part of the cere- **ies**  
mony, 'Custom' was the reply. The  
ignorance of some of the Brāhmans amazed  
and pained me. One of them asked, 'What  
can we do now the Véda has come into your  
hands?' Then, in a kind of angered grief,  
he said to his son, 'You must learn from  
this Sahib now.' Many asked questions  
about our religious teaching, which showed  
earnest thought and a wish to learn. Again  
and again we were asked why we had never  
brought such words before, and when we  
would come again. Sometimes we were  
treated rudely, sometimes showed, plainly  
but politely, that we were not wanted. Several  
times we were asked why we came there in  
such a way. Why didn't we keep the main  
road? Why didn't we have a chariot and  
servants? What was the real purpose of  
our visit? When we said that we came to



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teach the true way that leads from sin to the One True God, we were greeted with an incredulous shrug. 'Oh, dear no; you must have some ulterior aim. Are you seeing where schools are needed, or what are you doing for the Government?' More than once it was said with a kind of churlish insinuation that we were defrauding them, 'Other Sahibs have come with horses and servants. Why do you come in this poverty-stricken way?' Through it all I was patiently and carefully studying the bearing of everything I saw and learned upon my main purpose and problem. The difficulty of the problem grew upon me daily.

We spent three days in the midst **Festival** of the ten thousand people who came to Yediyuru temple festival, which I had seen from the outside a year before. Our tent was in the midst of the crowd. Audiences and questioners were

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never wanting, except when the great car of Siddhalingēshvara was drawn at noon. Once two elderly men spoke out of the ring around us, and said, 'Why, sir, we repeat "Our Father" every day.' I said, 'Are you Christians, then?' 'Oh, no; we could not become Christians; we should be put out of Caste, and that would be worse than death.' 'When you say, "Thy will be done, &c.,"' I asked, 'does it not mean that you should obey the Lord Jesus and follow Him fully?' 'Sir,' they said, 'we have given up worshipping material forms; we bend as we were taught in your school to our Father. Don't you think God must think us worthy of much reward because we do so much?' One man wished to test my right to teach. 'Can you introduce a clean cloth down your throat into your inside and draw it out again as clean as when it went in?' When I said I had never made that experiment, he said,

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' Seems to me you're not much of a teacher. Ours are as pure as that, and can do wondrous things.' When the sun went down we still kept on at our task. Then the people began to get their food, and we had ours. The clear moon shone upon everything so clearly that we could read without strain, and it gave to the whole scene a tender setting. There was weird yet attractive music near our tent, and I saw one of the most graceful simple dances, where sticks were touched in the winding round to the time of the music. I was allowed to enter the temple court, barefoot, of course, and studied forms of worship there. I tried hard to see all I could, to learn all I could, but it seemed at the end as if one were only beginning to see a little of the depth and width of the gulf.

Our cart had many a strain, and was turned over more than once. We had one road begun as a famine relief work, and left

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unfinished. It was worse than the country tracks worn by wheels and rain. There was much scrub-jungle, and several village names were preceded by 'Tiger.' The whole scene suggested them. We had two most interested audiences in the morning. They were very shy of us at first. The women beat their mouths, and hastened out of sight. One by one we drew the men near, and their intelligent concern about religion was most cheering. In the afternoon we told the bullock boy to meet us at 'Tiger Hill,' some few miles along the road, and we went to two villages off the road. Intelligent questioning after our teaching detained us, so that twilight was gone as we left the last village. It was full moon. The country was lonely and noiseless, save for jackals. The silence was only broken by our voices. John Mark said, 'What if a tiger comes, sir?' I said, 'We must

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pray to Daniel's God.' But as the distance grew, and we were tired, it was trying to both. After a long while we heard the welcome bark of a dog, and found our boys asleep outside the village.

**The Headman gives Food** When they could be roused, they said they were tired, and had cooked no food, as the headman of the village gave food to all who asked. He ploughed twenty yoke of oxen, had fingers covered with gold, and always gave food. John Mark said, ' Their rice is coarser than our rāgi, and you could never bear their burning hot curry.' I said I would try, and anyhow we must have that or fast at that hour. The food was given. They would not suffer us to draw water from the village well, lest our vessels should defile it, but were good enough to draw water for us in their own vessels and pour it into ours. They were Sudras, the fourth Caste, whose only duty is service to the first three.

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When the food came, one was glad to test one's power. It was as if a mustard plaster had been applied all down one's throat, and the whole inner organism smarted next morning. We lay down to rest on the hillside near the village. I watched the eclipse of the moon, and listened to the wild music of the village, which they thought might help the moon out of the jaws of the monster Rāhu.

In the morning we went to call **A** upon the headman, to thank him **Haughty** for his hospitality. We found him **Headman** in the fields near. As we made salaams, he eyed us as if he would search us through. His manner was as obtrusively overbearing as his many gold rings. Before we could thank him, he scowlingly asked what we were doing there. I said we had come to thank him for his kindness of the night before. Heedless of our thanks, he said, ' But why do you go about the country like

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this ? ' I replied that we wished to teach the true way of deliverance from sin. Then, in unconcealed anger, he exclaimed, ' Sin ! Do you mean to tell *me* of my sin ? I feed twenty persons every night of my life. Is not that more than enough to balance my sin ? What deliverance do I need ? No, no ; that is not all.' I studied the man and his thought as I said, ' We have no other purpose than to lead men to the grace of God, our Father in Jesus Christ.' ' Oh,' cried he, ' I thought perhaps you might have come to see what villages need schools. But why did you not come dressed like other Sahibs ? ' He then began insinuations of vile motives, and would not even receive my thanks.

**Jain** Another day, at noon, we rested  
**Village** by a clear stream running between  
**School** silvery sand banks, with a few shady trees, near a village where a number of Jains live. These are closely akin to

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Buddhists in thought and practice. Buddhism was quenched in, or driven out of, its homeland by persecution. The exact relation of the Jains to Gautama is unknown, but they survived in Mysore, where they once had great influence. Many of them are wealthy merchants and landowners. Their horror of hurting life rules all their conduct. All the laws agree that not to hurt life is the highest virtue, and this view is carried out by them to the extremest point. We went through the stream to the village, and found the Government school. The master offered me the only chair, and asked me if I would be good enough to draw out some of the things his boys had learned. They brought the 'Amara' (immortal), a dictionary of Sanskrit nouns grouped with wondrous art in order of synonyms and showing their gender, in verse. It is a Jain work which could not be destroyed in the persecutions ;



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the sea would not drown it. Now it is the basis of all school teaching in languages dependent on Sanskrit. How the boys threw their energy into the task of clear enunciation of verses from memory ! Then we had the Padya-Sāra, a school book of selections from Kanarese poetry. We read from that, ' Beware of bad company,' and ' Who is an Outcaste ? ' Of course, one carefully guarded against any Christian reference on that neutral ground.

While we were inside the school,  
**The Priest** I was so absorbed in hearing the boys that I did not notice the verandahs were full of people listening. There was an audience waiting for us, and the priest of the temple among them. He was a noble-looking man, had graceful features and deep, thoughtful eyes. They fetched him a seat, and set it on one side of the verandah, and gave me the school chair on the other. They all listened intently to

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all we said. I could not help watching the expression on the priest's face. When we had finished, he said, 'Our village is honoured by your presence to-day, and we have listened with reverence to your words. You have spoken of sin and deliverance, but what about your own sins?' 'Would you please be good enough to tell me of them?' I said. Solemnly fixing his piercing eyes upon me, he replied, as if his whole energy throbbed in his words, 'Taking life is to us a sin for which there is no pardon. Taking life for food is more grievous still; but taking the life of the sacred cow for food is the abomination of all abominable sins.' I said, 'Do you not think it would have been wise to ask first if I do commit that sin?' 'What,' said he, 'did ever a Briton live who did not eat beef?' When I told him I did not eat beef or flesh, his wonderment grew until I said, 'Ask my friend here; he knows my life.' He turned

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to John Mark, and when he had satisfied himself that I had really given up eating flesh food, it seemed as if there came into our talk a certain something I could feel but cannot tell. We talked till twilight, then left for our evening rest. Between the village and the stream I heard footsteps behind us, and found several men who had listened following. They said, 'We should like to talk further if you can.' Gladly we asked them to go with us. We sat on a sandbank in the midst of the stream. The stars were so clear and seemed so brilliantly near that I could more than fancy heaven broods over earth. The men talked of their struggles toward the ideal. I told them of mine, and what I felt the Lord Jesus meant to me, what I felt He could be to them. The meal was forgotten for two or three hours, and I began to wonder if one had taken one real step towards crossing the gulf.

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These are, I believe, fair typical instances of our work during those Indica-  
tions days. I tried hard, as hard as strength would permit, to see what could be done by Kanarese food and partly Kanarese dress. So far as I know, I left nothing possible undone to reach the hearts of men, and to prepare myself to travel and preach, depending solely and alone upon what might be given one. The Lord's command to His disciples was ever sounding in my heart. I did not even then grasp all that was meant by 'Go to your own alone, not to other nations.' They were among their own Caste ; I was being taught I was not, taught bitterly indeed. I walked barefoot always after the first few days, and kept myself wholly to the one purpose of avoiding everything that could offend.

When we were nearing Gubbi, I was so

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tired that I sat down in the springless cart to rest. John Mark smiled out the Kanarese proverb, 'The wrestler trained for twelve years, then threw a helpless old grandmother.'

### III

‘Baffled to fight better.’

**Gubbi  
again**      WHEN we had returned to Gubbi, I found that the seven weeks’ strain had most severely tested nerves and digestive organs. There were lonely days, and nights of unnameable depression. Then came a crop of big, painful boils. One of the worst, in my left armpit, was so painful that I could only lie on my back with outstretched arm. I was too full of pain and exhaustion to read, and so had to face alone life’s task and meaning. Why did I become a minister? Why did I leave the home work and come to Mysore? Was my last venture absolutely necessary, was it worth so much pain? I could only feel after earnest search that in each case I had acted from a sincere conviction, to which I

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could not have been disobedient without inward wrong. I had then to face the results of my experiment in food and dress, and see how far it made one more efficient as a helper of men. Must it be continued ? Could I hope to reach my aim of travelling without luggage of any sort ?

In Vrindāvana there was a sacred **Crow and Peacocks** fig-tree, where crows had nested and lived happily. There was a banyan-tree near where peacocks lived. One of the crows, seeing the peacocks and crows together, thought to himself that the peacock's Caste was so much more excellent than his own, that he picked up the peacock's cast-off feathers, stuck them among his own, left his own family, and in his new guise lived among the peacocks as one of themselves for several days. One day his voice was heard, and the peacocks said, ' This isn't a peacock ; he has been deceiving us while living among us.' Then

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they all set upon him with beaks and spurs, till, sore wounded and shamed, he sought to get back again among his own family. The crows well understood why he left them, why he wished to return, and said to him, 'You despised us, thinking you would honour yourself by trying to join others. Go to them now ; there is no place for you here. Be off ! We will not have you among us.' The Kanarese moral is writ large : 'Therefore whosoever, despising his own Caste, seeks to pass himself off as belonging to another, he is good for nothing whatever ; he is wholly gone to the bad.' It was one thing to read the story. I was pointed out and laughed at as the crow. I had to learn what it meant through ridicule and shame.

In the mind of the Kanarese people it is a self-evident truth **Meaning** that he who apes the customs and dress of another Caste, thereby confesses



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that Caste is to him superior to his own. That truth moulds life. But one's own birth-status ('jāti') cannot be altered. Our very make-up attests that. The attempt to appear as if belonging to another is gross, unworthy deceit, as senseless as useless. Inevitably the birth-constitution will out, the crow will caw, and the deceiver, cast out by both Castes, goes to the bad. I could not have learned the inwardness of the story without making the experiment. How much it cost me ! That must be learned and owned when we talk of ' native dress.'

<b>Brāhman</b>	I had a dear Brāhman friend.
<b>Judge-</b>	He called himself a Wesleyan Hindu.
<b>ment of</b>	
<b>Dress</b>	He had been trained in our High
	School deeply admired his teachers, and
	reverenced our Lord Jesus sincerely. ' I
	cannot become a Christian,' he would say.
	There were some things in our system he
	could not accept, and many in his ancestral

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faith that he could not leave ; but he was one of the noblest, truest men. When a little strength returned and pain lessened, I wrote to him, telling him what I had done, my purpose and my hope. He wrote back, ' Caste is birth. Whatever you do, you cannot alter it. However you dress or eat, you will be and will be known as an Englishman. Your motives in change of dress would be misunderstood and misconstrued.' I had asked him to tell me frankly ; I believe he did. Years of thought have taught me how true and sane his judgment was.

Soon after I resumed duties, I was at Kunigal, and rode out a few miles to call on the headman at Bidinagiri. He was taught in our day school, gave up the worship of material forms, and set up in front of his house carved stones of witness that God is One, that idolatry is vain, and that there is but

**Sudra's  
Judge-  
ment**

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

one Saviour. He could not become a Christian outwardly by baptism. He was a Sudra, respected, one might almost say revered, by all who knew him, for his real worth. When he saw me he said solemnly and earnestly, 'I am right glad to see you in your own proper dress. I hope you will never change it again.' I told him my purpose in doing as I had done. I cannot tell how he spoke. It was as if I were sitting at the feet of a teacher, whose words and personality filled me with awe, as he said, 'Don't you perceive, sir, that if you adopt the dress of these idolaters, they will say, "You ought to adopt our worship, too"?' That thought had never come to me. Its force in its bearing upon my whole life-work made me tremble.

The judgement of friends supported the ridicule of others. Both together confirmed the conviction ripening within that the change of dress

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could not help, but must hinder, me as a minister of Christ among the Kanarese people. As to flesh food, the feeling that to eat it was an outrage upon the most sacred conviction of the great majority of people around me was so strong and overwhelming within me that I determined not to eat beef or pork, and to abstain from all other meat as far as health and courtesy to others would allow. Though here one feared possible misconstruction. In Sanskrit stories, when old tigers, cats, and herons can no longer easily get prey, they are made to feign penitence for having eaten flesh, and to use that as a device for obtaining new opportunity.

A cat wished to eat some young birds. Seeing an old blind vulture who lived on the charity of other birds, the cat spoke to him. 'Who are you?' said the vulture. 'A cat.' 'Get thee hence, wicked animal!' 'What!

**Cat  
and  
Vulture**

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

Is a cat to be punished or praised simply because he is a cat ? Only when you know his conduct thoroughly can you justly decide whether he deserves praise or blame.'

'What is your method of life ?' said the vulture.

'I bathe daily, I never eat flesh, I am a bachelor-student. Let me share the hollow of your tree. For it is written :

The good are gracious to the lowest animals,  
Does the moon withhold her light from the Outcaste's hut ?

'Ah ! but cats have a taste for flesh, and young birds live above.'

The cat touched her two ears and the ground in solemn oath, and swore it read the divine laws and had forsaken all such evil practices. But after it had gained the vulture's hollow tree as its home, it ate the young birds on the sly. When the parent birds began to inquire who ate their nestlings, the cat slunk off, and they killed the vulture ! That principle meets one always,

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and our whole method of work is said to be guileful stratagem to lead men away from Caste rather by fraud than attempt it by force. Thus pondering, I felt that abstinence from flesh food was my only course.

‘Native’ is used ordinarily as **Native** the result of a hasty, if not ignorant, **Dress and** generalization. All non-Europeans **Food** in India are ‘natives.’ All are treated as one homogeneous whole, and as if, therefore, it were simplicity itself to adopt native dress. The deep, ineffaceable distinctions are only seen and felt after such a test as I had made. Which native dress should I wear? I could not wear all even of those worn in the Mysore, and I learnt that Mysore is but a small province of India, which has many more differences. ‘Adopt native food and manners’ had been urged upon me from all motives and quarters. I was told it would promote health, it would help to make one’s work more effective,

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and was the only means of saving missionary work from failure. Which Caste custom was I to adopt ? I could not adopt them all. Some I dared not for the sake of manhood. I tried in the most careful way possible to see how one form of food affected health, and for me it caused an illness which has brought years of pain.

**Further Thought** I have thought through the results of those months of struggle, and after the most careful scrutiny possible to me, something like the following outline seems clear : 'Caste,' as we call it from the Portuguese 'casta' (breed or race), is in Mysore 'jāti' (i.e. birth, family, tribe). Birth determines Caste ; Caste is birth. Constitution, condition, life-function, follow from that. No one can alter his birth ; birth is destiny, divine and sacred, the pre-arranged reward or punishment of past deeds. Food is a family sacrifice, birth alone gives right there. Caste customs are

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as necessary and inevitable to each Caste as life function is to each family of animals. If I attempt to adopt any other Caste custom than that of my birth, it means I despise my own and acknowledge the other as superior, but I only deceive myself. I am what I was born. If I could really adopt the custom of any Caste and be acknowledged by that Caste as truly belonging to its family, it would mean that I brought myself into the sectional antagonisms of Castes, which would make the universal purpose of God's love in Christ for all men as brothers, impossible.

Those convictions made one outward method of work impossible **Spirit, not Form** to me, but the purpose and aim of that method, the aim of my life, was still beyond. How could I bring the love of Christ as the law of life into the source of other men's motives? Rather, how could Christ Himself do it in and through me?



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My attempt to reach others turned in upon myself. How far was I inwardly, spiritually equipped for such a task? The sense of unworthiness even to bear the name of Christ grew. It seemed as if all the years of discipleship had but made Him say of me, 'You know not what manner of spirit you are of.' 'Do not mind the things of men, but of God.' As I prayed for insight, humility, and teachableness to learn of Christ, there came with clear commanding force the conviction that I must aim at the moral motives of men, their new creation in the Spirit of Jesus. To attempt to change outward conditions and forms first, and still leave men what they were before in their self-centre, was of little avail. What men are in the moral quality of the self, that counts. I could not, however much I wished, bridge over the chasms of birth, but all the more deeply was the need of spiritual re-birth pressed into me. The Lord's own

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

method, life touching life to divine issues, began to grow plain ; I was impelled to try to follow Him in that. How high, how hard it seemed ! I must be what I wished others to become. It was hard to bear ridicule, shame, and pain, but what must it mean to become the organ of Christ through which He alone should act, act with the highest force He could communicate to His instrument ? I trembled at my calling, but I dare not shrink from it. I sought grace to try again.

Then I began to learn a little of my ignorance. Had I learned more inwardly the thought of the people, in their best books and in the lives of the best men, I should have seen that some of the necessary data for solving the life-problem before me were not yet mine. Yet I do not know how I could have reached the point from which I could gain the necessary insight if I had not made that experiment.

Ignor-  
ance of  
Condi-  
tions

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

How little I really knew of their inward thought, its heights and depths! My ignorance of their sacred scriptures appalled me. I was most deeply ashamed that I had ever attempted to teach. I could no longer be content with secondhand presentations of their thought. I was impelled by a force I could not resist to set myself to learn as much as I could of their scriptures in the original, so that the spirit and genius of it might be grasped. Putting myself into the spiritual position of the people, I would thus teach them the life of Christ's love.

**Scripture  
is Witness**      Once I went with a missionary to a village as he was going to preach.

There was in the village a Brāhman student who had just come home from the great school at Sringeri, the seat of their great high-priest. He is called the 'Jagadguru,' the world-spiritual-director of the Smārta Brāhmans. The student and the missionary began talking of religion, and

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

the conversation, as always, soon centred in the unbeginning past, deeds done in which determine the present. 'Is it fair,' said the missionary, 'for God to reward or punish us in this life for deeds done in a past life of which we have no memory?' 'Were you ever an infant?' 'Yes, of course.' 'Have you any memory of your infancy?' 'No.' 'Yet you must admit that period of which you have no memory has been the most fruitful.' 'Yes, but though I have no memory of infancy, I have friends who knew me as a baby; and their witness, together with what I have seen of children, certifies to me that I was an infant. What is witness to that unbeginning past?' The Brāhman hissed out two words, 'Çāstravé sākshi' (the scripture itself is witness). I can see and hear him now. His training made itself felt in every thought, in every tone. The whole energy of the man was uttered in those two words. In that hour

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I was convinced that missionary work in India means the contact and conflict of the Sanskrit and Christian Scripture—the Vēda and the Bible. Each is the flower and fruit of a nation's spirit and genius. Who yet knows, who can tell, all the differences in their presuppositions, their goal, their discipline? Whatever may be the forms of action and interaction of the faiths arising out of and nourished by those Scripture-sources, all must prepare for and centre in that great conflict. Its issues for our race, for the millions of men professing such varied faiths from those sources, who can tell? As we sat in that verandah, I vowed that I would try to learn the meaning and spirit of that 'Scripture-witness,' so that I might feel with the men to whom I would teach Jesus. I must learn the Scripture itself if it were possible; I could not be content with what others said about it.

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

During those three years, what-  
ever the outer form of duty, I **Kanarese**  
worked hard at the prescribed **Sanskrit**  
**Kanarese** examinations, in the study of  
books, of spoken words, and of the under-  
lying thought as far as I could. It was no  
easy task. At first there was a perpetual  
mental translation from English into  
Kanarese. I was urged on to aim at  
thinking, dreaming in Kanarese. It must  
become the innermost part of my very self,  
before I could hope to make it the medium  
of persuading men. When I asked my  
teacher for the meaning of some terms in  
the beginning of Kanarese grammar, he  
said that must be learned in Sanskrit. He  
gave the same reply when asked for  
the derivation and make-up of words.  
Therefore, in my first year I learned the  
Sanskrit characters, and continued that  
study in addition to Kanarese. Time and  
further study made the necessity of San-

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skrit as the key to all religious thought to me imperative. One of our Kanarese ministers said to me, ' If we could only learn enough Sanskrit to cope with Brāhmans on equal terms, how it would help us in our preaching ! ' Every step made me feel that one must live oneself into the very spirit of the people. Their religious thought came from the Sanskrit ; I must learn that, and the thought of the people, too.

## IV

· Learning went to the Brāhman and said, 'I am thy Treasure, Guard me.'—MANU. ii, 14.

THE Rājah of Sakrayapatna had two daughters. He gave one town **Chikmagalur** to each on marriage. The one is 'Town of the elder daughter,' Hiremagalur; the other, 'Town of the younger daughter,' Chikkamagalur. At Hiremagalur there is a stone pillar, carved as ascending flame. There a famous king made a snake-sacrifice, and it is firmly believed that if any one bitten by a cobra comes to the pillar, then drinks of the holy well near, and walks round it in prayer three times, he will be saved from the poison. In a small temple there is a stone representing the axe of the Brāhman hero, Parasu Rāma, who with his axe cleared the earth of the



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kingly Caste twenty-one times. There one stands on the border of the Holy Land of the Brāhmans. The town of the younger daughter has outgrown that of the elder, is the head of a district, and is of importance in the coffee growth and trade. My house at Chikmagalur was built of mud, native tiles, no ceiling nor glass, a mud floor, which was duly cleansed with 'sagani' (cow-dung), the precious sin-destroying cleanser. At first it was disagreeable, but one grew to feel it might be pure. Rats would run up my bedposts, a snake would draw a frog into its hole under the door. But green grass—not English turf, but the nearest like it of any I saw in Mysore—grew there in the rains. The highest peak of the Chandra Drona Mountains overlooked the town ; thence had been brought a perennial stream of water. By the side of the house was a plot of rank grass, which spade work turned into a garden, in which water, soil,

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and climate helped to grow the best English vegetables I grew in the Mysore, and sweet potatoes as big as a forearm. My garden is always to me a symbol of my life-work. I hoped that garden might thrive there.

As soon as the prescribed language tests were passed, I set myself to **The Daily Round** the study of Ancient Kanarese and Sanskrit. To do that I religiously continued the method of my Gubbi life. I rose at 4 a.m., and spent two hours in prayers and study. At 6 a.m. I had a light meal of plantains, bread, and water. Then I visited a village to preach, or examine a school. At 10 a.m. I was back for breakfast, after which came half an hour's rest. From 12 to 3 I read with my Munshi. Private study followed until 5. Then I worked an hour in the garden, or went to bazaar preaching, or received Kanarese friends. I dined, as convenient, at any time after 7.30, and retired to rest at 10 p.m.

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In Ancient Kanarese study I came  
**Conscience** upon a passage where a king, receiving his crown, said he would govern according to 'manassākshi' (i.e. 'the witness of the internal sense'). That was the very word European missionaries used for 'conscience.' It was held that they had coined it, as there was no word for conscience in Sanskrit or Kanarese. It startled me to find the word used more than a thousand years before, in a sense that certainly was near to the Christian sense. At every point one felt the need of an appeal to the inner man. Then in the Sanskrit Dharma Çāstra (i.e. Sacred Law Book) I came upon the verse, 'Verily the wicked think, "No one sees us," but the gods watch them and their inner man.' There is a story in the Mahābhārata, telling how a king was hunting near a famous hermitage. The hermit was absent, but his adopted daughter gave the king their best hospitality.

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The king married her there, promised to fetch her to his palace, and said that her son should succeed him on his throne. He did not fulfil his promise. When her son was thirteen years old, the hermit bade her go to the Rājāh with the lad, and claim his promise. The king denied all knowledge of her. Then she said, 'The wicked when he sins thinks, "I am all alone, no one sees"; but the sun and moon see, the heavenly gods see, and the inward personality sees.'

Those thoughts prompted my first Kanarese booklet. I placed that thought first from their own sacred scriptures, and tried to appeal to the inner man in the spirit of the Sacred Law Book, which says, 'Despise not, then (your) own self, the highest witness of men.' When the tract was submitted for printing it was said, 'A Kanarese man might read this and worship all the more fervently in the next

**The  
Inward  
Man**

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

idol temple to which he came.' That was intended as condemnation, I believe. I could not but feel if a man were moved to more fervent worship in the best way he knew, because of the inner self-witness to sin, that was the first step towards betterment. The tract was eventually printed, and a missionary friend said years afterwards it was eagerly read by literary Brāhmans. That set me thinking more deeply. How easy it is to claim to coin a word when you are ignorant of an ancient literature ! How much care is needed if what we deem an exact equivalent of one of our concepts is not expressed in another language in one word, lest we should hastily conclude that the thing is unknown. I was impelled by that experience to search further into the spirit of their scripture, that I might reach the inner personality of every man.

The study of that year strengthened what had been growing within me all along.

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

‘Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them,’ must determine one’s whole inner attitude towards the people, their scriptures, and their religion. I began to feel that denouncing the worst things in people, and holding up their sacred things to ridicule, were wholly contradictory to the spirit and word of our Lord. I could not hold up the worst debasement of idolatry, so unspeakably sensual, and whatever is worst in Kanarese life, and claim that it was all the result of their religion, which was, therefore, bad, and must be forsaken ; then, on the other side, hold up a purely ideal form of the Christian religion, and compare the ideal of one side with the actual life of the other. I do not judge that method, but I could not follow it myself. If a Brāhman came to England and proclaimed that our drunkenness, our social evils, our political methods, and much that

**The  
Golden  
Rule**

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

we deplore in our national life was the direct outcome of our religion, and a sure sign of its utter badness, I should demur, and demand that it must first be considered how far they were results necessarily growing out of our religion, and so indicating its moral quality. I felt the Lord's rule claimed that I should put myself in the Kanarese men's place, and see what they thought. I soon found that they resented the suggestion of evil practices being the inevitable outgrowth of their religion, as energetically as I should if the Brāhman had made the charge to me about Christianity. If the Brāhman held up an ideal interpretation of the Védic faith as the only faith for man, and condemned our actual life from the standpoint of his ideal, I should ask, 'Is that ideal real? Is it an all-round, fair presentation of the system? Is yours the only interpretation of your scripture, or are there differences deep and wide among your-

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

selves ? ' The Kanarese Brāhman who has been taught English judges Christians thus, sometimes captiously, sometimes carefully and reverently. They hold that there are few, if any, true followers of Jesus now. The meekness of our Saviour has appealed to their inner self, and their reverence for Him is only equalled by their perception of the difference between His New Testament portraiture and European Christians—yes, European missionaries. They see the differences between Christians that have no communion with each other, each claiming to be the only true faith, the only true way of salvation, and they ask, ' Which Christian religion must we accept ? '

I could but feel one must learn more and more inwardly what the best, confessedly so among themselves, really amounted to, in ideal and aim. How much there is of kinship between that and our Lord's ideal and life gradually grew

**Appeal  
to the  
Best**



## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

upon me with fuller study. I could then fairly and with a good conscience compare our failure—mine, not theirs only—in the presence of that ideal. Our deep need for inward help then became plain. It was above question that the meek goodness of our Lord was the life commanded by the highest ethical standard. From that position I could the more fervently and faithfully confess my faith in Him as leading unworthy me into His own fellowship. There was no other course for me than to learn the best in all their thought, compare the worst with that, and thence appeal to the inward need of forgiveness, of saving grace to help a man against himself, and lead him to become what he wished to be.

Sacrificial thought and practice  
**Sacrifice** ruled the life of Ancient Brāhmans,  
but the teaching of Gautama concerning the sanctity of life, perhaps also the feeling of Brāhmans themselves, caused

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

animal sacrifices to cease among them almost absolutely. Sacrifice now is mental and symbolical, though every meal is still a sacrifice. It impressed me greatly to learn that this change of attitude towards sacrifice should have gone on in India just before our Lord's death caused the abolition of animal sacrifices. All the more deeply I thought of what His sacrifice of Himself meant. 'He bore our sins in His own body on the tree.' What could that mean if it did not mean that the Sinless One counted our sins as His own, not personally, but in that inward unity of manhood which made Him all He is to us? The dreadful debasement of life, especially in the case of the women who were dedicated to the temple services of Mysore; the exemption of temple sculpture from the penal code; the awful miasma of degrading superstition which poisoned men and paralysed them—these and many forms of unnameable evil

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

entered into one with feeling words do not know. But the women devoted to the gods from before birth were women,—children of our Father, our sisters—mine ; and the pain of their sin burdened, almost crushed, me. The men who confessed to me they could not help such and such sins were men. The priests of Māri, the goddess of lust, blood, and death—I saw them at their worship, and felt a little of what their life meant. I saw men run barefoot through hottest fires ; men worship the unseen powers with fire, and call them with their bells. All the tragedy of it grew upon me. Were all these men my brothers ? Yes, if Christ is the Saviour of all. I began to feel their sin as the sin of my own flesh and blood, to confess it with shame and confusion of face, to feel my own weakness, and pray for saving grace for us all.

Two Srivaishnava Brāhmans often came to my little hut in Chikmagalur. One of

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

them had been trained in one of our high schools. We talked of books **Brāhman** and religion. The student of our **Friends** school said, 'One of your missionaries taught us in school that Jesus Christ is the very essence of God,' and added, 'Therefore, God must be rubbish.' At first I could not see his thought at all ; but after I had considered a moment it was clear. The mental process was, I thought, something like this : 'Essence of God ? Yes ; essence is the life-sap of a tree ; then the vital quality of anything which if taken away leaves the rest sapless, worthless.' Once he brought to see me a learned man, a poet, who was staying with him for some days. My friend was a coffee planter. The poet had written a poem on Coffee—' Kāpi ' as it is called there. He derived the word from a Sanskrit verb, ' to drink.' I suggested the word was derived from a foreign tongue, but he said it must be so treated

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

when once the word was used in their poetry. Then the poem extolled the virtues of coffee, and accounted for it thus. There was a lady attendant in Vishnu's heaven, 'Veikuntha,' of whom Vishnu was very fond because of her beauty and devotion. Then she offended the god, and he condemned her to earth, but for the sake of her former devotion she was to become the beautiful tree which bears the refreshing berry. The next time my friend came he told me the poet while there had written some erotic verses, and added with energy, 'You blame us for our tendencies, but those verses soothed my soul. I cannot help it; it is in our very blood.' When one of the elder ladies of his house died, I condoled with him. He told me how happily she died. She could see Vishnu's heaven in all its glory and beauty, and Vishnu's attendants were there with smiling faces to carry her that she might prostrate herself at his

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

feet. One day he said to me, 'Will you tell us frankly what is your relation to the British Government?' 'What exactly do you mean?' I asked. 'Are you in any sense agents of the British Government? With us religion is an affair of State, and the Rājah must see that it is strong. Is your work intended really to strengthen British rule in India?' When I said our only relation to the British Government was that of loyal subjects, and that we were in no sense, paid or otherwise, agents of the Crown, he seemed incredulous. We talked long about it; I believe he accepted my word, and yet found it difficult to believe there was nothing behind.

I went to the Girls' School regularly for the Scripture lessons. The Gospels there became Eastern books to me. I tried to let the Eastern local colouring of our Lord's words affect the children and myself. After one of the

**Girls'  
School**

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

girls died, I went to visit her father. He was sitting in his shop. Tears filled his eyes as I said, 'Your heart must be very sore.' 'Yes, my heart is very sore; but I wanted to see you, to tell you my Kamala did not speak about our god and our bliss beyond when she was ill; she was always talking about the things you taught her out of your book, about your Jesus, Lord and Saviour. She kept on repeating your prayer to "Our Father," and when she died she said she was going to Jesus.'

I spent several weeks visiting **Malnād** the coffee planters on their estates, and teaching in the villages as well. The 'Malnād' (i.e. rain-country) in the west of Mysore is holy ground to Brāhmans. By titanic force one of the sons of Brahmā, in pride and rage, hurled the earth into the sea. Vishnu took the form of a boar, whose eyes were the sun and moon. His tusks were 'tunga' (uplifted) and 'bhadrā'

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

(strong). When by the might of his tusks he had heaved up the earth from the sea, he rested from his labour on the 'Boar Mountain.' As the perspiration trickled down his Tunga tusk it formed the source of the Tunga river ; and that down Bhadra formed the source of the Bhadra. The two streams rise together on the Boar Mountain, separate, flow through valleys among the Chandra Drona group of mountains, and join to form the Tunga Bhadra, eight miles east of Shimoga. The valleys through which they flow, crowned by massive mountains, are of wondrous beauty. Trees bear brilliant flowers ; their new budding leaves equal flowers in beauty of tone. The frankincense trees are as graceful as they are fragrant. Bamboos, looking like majestic ferns, have fronds many yards high. Orchids thrive in tree forks and on branches. In the valleys grow rice, sugar, and the choicest areca-nut palms. On the moun-



## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

tain slopes, under the shade of selected giant trees, Mysore coffee blooms into fruit. Tree ferns, canes, and ferns down to the finest forms grow under trees or in damp rocks. The river sometimes broadens out like a lake, and reflects heaven and all around with tender grace, then will rush through rocky gorges, or seemingly play through lovely cascades.

**Forest  
Studies** The banks of these streams were chosen by the ancient sages for the sites of their hermitages, where they could ponder the Eternal Divine. The earliest parts of the 'Science-Section' of the Védas are called 'Forest-studies.' When the Brāhman teacher had performed his household duties, and his sons could take charge of his home, he retired to the forest to prepare to rejoin the Source of Life. To such studies we owe the Spirit of the 'Upanishads,' which moulds thought in India to-day powerfully, and is spreading

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

westward. Streams, valleys, hills are sacred to the memory of such thinkers still. As you travel there the spirit of the mighty forests' and the rivers wins to deep thought, reverence, and worship. There the sages questioned into the deepest depths of self within, and to the furthest bound of thought above, around.

At Tirthahalli the river has worn the rocky bed into strange forms. Tirtha-  
halli In the centre is the 'Tirtha' (i.e. holy bathing-place). A pasage has been worn under a rock, part of which is left like a bridge, the water gurgling through up the other side. Whoever bathes there, and passes under the rock, emerges free from every stain. I wondered how it could be done alive. Rāma the Axe-bearer was commanded by his father to avenge his honour on his wife, who had dishonoured him. Obedience to father and reverence for mother were binding duties. He obeyed

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

his father, but the stain of vengeance on his mother clung to his inner man. After all possible expiation and visiting in penance every holy place, a stain of sin as big as a mustard seed could not be cleansed away, until he passed under this 'Tirtha.' Then he was wholly pure.

Agastya was the great sage who **Agastya** is revered as the father of learning in the South. His name and wondrous power of devotion haunts Kalasa and the mountains round. There is a temple there, said to have been built to atone for the sin of taking life in the chase. There I saw a student chanting his Sanskrit lesson over and over in the temple porch. I asked if he would be good enough to tell me the meaning, and he said, 'The meaning is not yet given.' From the temple gate, the main street of the old city was clear—mounds of ruin on each side covered with grass. A few Brāhman houses were there

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

still. I was asked to sit down in the verandah of one. The Brāhman was, I think, glad to receive a Gospel in Sanskrit, but said, 'Who can teach me its meaning? I want a spiritual guide to teach me truly.' I had to leave after some time, wishing true spiritual guides could be raised up and sent to such.

But Sringeri is the holiest spot of all. A sage lived there whose Rishya  
Sringa mighty devotion enabled him to reduce his foes to ashes by his flashing eyes. He caused a son, 'Rishya sringa' (i.e. the deer-horned sage) to be born apart from human aid. The lad grew to early manhood without seeing a woman. The kingdom of Anga suffered sore from drought and famine. The sages said that Rishya Sringa must be brought from his father's hermitage and marry the king's adopted daughter; but they feared his father's eyes. The loveliest maidens were sent, disguised as

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

hermits, to decoy him away. In the father's absence they fascinated the youth, until he joined them at their hermitage, which was a raft on the river. He was borne away willingly in their company. He married the king's daughter, and afterward he performed the sacrifice which caused the birth of Rāma, the incarnation of Vishnu, as the Ideal King. Rāma himself visited there during his exile, and the mountain is pointed out where he met Hanumanta, the monkey-god, who helped to save Rāma's wife from Rāvana.

Twelve hundred years ago Sanka-  
**Sankarā-** rāchārya formulated the ' Advaita '  
**chārya** —'Non-dual '—system of religious  
thought, which has since ruled all the  
thought of Smārta Brāhmans, and deeply  
affected the systems that differ from it.  
The questioning of the sages in the Upani-  
shads varied much in scope and quality.  
It seems hard to make all cohere in one

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

consistent whole. Thence Sākya Muni, the Buddha, had drawn his thought which so deeply questioned the roots of thinking. His followers were persecuted, and his form of religious thought was banished from his home. Still, it left its mark on the thinking of the Brāhmans. There are hints of earlier attempts to systematize the thought of the ancient scriptures. The Brahma Sūtras are one of the most noteworthy efforts to form Brāhmanic thought in the compressed mnemonic phrases which they perfected. Sankara, by his commentary on those Sūtras and on the Upanishads, defined the Non-dual interpretation of the Védas and of life, and defended it against all other. As a record of thinking it amazes one the more one studies it. There our axioms are questioned, our certainties are illusion. But when the spreading influence of that system of thought touches us more nearly, and when we have learned enough

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

to feel its force in India, we shall find that conflict with it will compel the reconsideration of all our own schemes and systems.

Sankara founded the seat of the 'World's spiritual-director' at Sringeri. For twelve hundred years there has been an unbroken succession of them, all buried—not burned as other Brāhmans—at Sringeri. They are chosen as children by certain marks, which divinely signify their destiny. I could not look at Sringeri unmoved. The country had its charm, but the history of so many life-moulding forces which have centred there filled me with reverent awe.

**Brāhmans**      The forests, mountains, valleys,  
**and the**      and rivers seemed somehow to  
**Vēda**      become part of myself. I could  
but worship there, though sometimes the  
squalor of man contrasted strangely with  
the splendour around. I do not know if the  
spirit of the forest did it, but it was as if  
one began to feel something of the inward-



*Photo by Rev. J. A. Vane, B.A.*

The 'World-Spiritual Director' of the Smartas, enthroned.

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## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

ness of the Brāhman's feeling for the Vēda. It is the most sacred family heritage. The Brāhman youth is twice born from the Vēdā and for its sake. For long periods it would seem to have been handed down from teacher to disciples, tested and found worthy. Divine powers were stored in its truth. That truth must not be taught to an unworthy, unauthorized person, as men do not sow good seed in salt soil. Even if a teacher were in dire distress, and teaching the Vēda to the unworthy would save him from death, he must prefer to die and let his knowledge burn with his body. The Vēda is the highest characteristic expression of the Hindu genius and spirit. It is their very own—the spirit and life of their blood. Hence comes their wonder at our pressing our scripture on every one, and they will sometimes say, 'Can that be good which needs so much pressing?'

On my way home from one of my

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

journeys in this Holy Land of the  
**Fever** Brāhmans, I halted at a damp, cheer-  
less rest-house. After the moist  
heat of the day, it repelled one. The terrible  
ache in every part of the body foretold  
coming ague. After a sleepless night, with  
great difficulty I rode to a drier resting-  
place. Then the ague began, all one's  
frame shaking with cold, though the ther-  
mometer stood at about 90°. Burning heat  
followed, then perspiration, till I collapsed  
in utter weakness. Home was dear and  
far then. A Scottish friend, after my  
return, said, 'Very sorry you have been ill ;  
fear you did too much.'

## V

‘ ’Tis a life-long toil till our lump be leaven,—  
The better ! What’s come to perfection perishes.’

A SAGE was seeking a site for his hermitage. On the bank of the Shimoga Tunga he found a spot where the buds of herbs for his simple food were sweet and tender. He called it ‘ Shi mogge ’ (sweet budding herbs). We call it Shimoga.

Shimoga Circuit was then about 6,000 square miles in area. There were one and a quarter millions of non-Christian people, and one Protestant European missionary. If the missionary and his Kanarese helpers had had nothing to do but teach, and could secure on an average an audience of twenty-five persons daily, it would have taken thirteen years for every person in that area to hear about Christ once. On

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

the west were the noble, wide-spreading forests of the Ghats, drenched with rain ; ninety miles eastward was Chitaldrug, the driest place in the province. During the rains everything grew mouldy. When the hot season began every bit of wood in the bungalow began to crack. The very name of Shimoga was dreaded for fever by the plain-country people. All that is mortal of two missionaries' wives lies in its cemetery.

In the town there was a small  
**Church,**  
**Schools**  
**and Work** church. The Christians were chiefly from other parts. There was a good girls' school in the Brāhman Street, another in the Merchants' Street, a good boys' school, a small school in the Outcaste hamlet, and the Normal School. In the surrounding district there was one girls' school at Davanagere, sixty miles away. In two years girls' schools were opened at Honnāli, Shikāripura, Soraba, Harihara, Tarikere ; and also a

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

branch school at Davanagere. I divided the district into three sections, and visited one each month. At that time I was one hundred and twenty miles from a railway. No bullocks were to be hired for travelling ; I had to buy and keep my own. I took no tea, coffee, or cocoa, no butter nor milk ; I used nothing but the barest necessities of life. The bread was very poor. When we were on circuit we had to take it with us ; it would become too hard to cut in the dry season, and grow mould nearly an inch thick during the rains.

I believe I baptized the first indigenous Merchant-Caste man in **Baptism** Shimoga. He came to visit me with an evangelist, and we had many conversations and many inquiries. One Saturday he came to my study with his 'juttu' (the sacred tuft of hair on the crown of head) shaven off, and said he was ready to give up all and follow Christ. The

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

next day, at the morning service, he was baptized into the Name. He became a teacher in the boys' school. For a time he was one of the most diligent and intelligent students of the scripture, and most faithful in all his duties.

**Brahman**      The evangelist with whom he  
**born**        came to me was a Brāhman by birth.

**Evan-**      When he was in training as an  
**gelist**     evangelist, some of our Kanarese men somewhat feared for him. He was led to become a Christian by one of our Kanarese ministers, who was born an Out-caste. Many a time we went preaching together, and my study was always open to him and all my helpers. Once as we were going to a village, I asked him if a certain sentence he had used was correct. How the fire flashed from his eyes ! ' Do you say that I, a born Brāhman, make a mistake in speech ? ' I asked him to consider if it were not so, meekly suggesting that it

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

was not wise even for a born Brāhman to think he could not make a mistake. We were good friends. He asked me to dine with him. We sat on the floor in the Brāhman manner. How his birth showed then ! I bowed my head in reverence as he taught his wee boy to pray, evidently as usual, and that meal with fingers was to me a benediction. Once I had to point out, with firm kindness, some Brāhman tendencies to which by his make-up he was subject, and which caused me much anxiety. He felt, I think, the contrast between them and the commands of our Lord. Before he left my study he said, ' Can we kneel down while you pray, sir ? ' I could scarcely pray for thought of the struggle between the old and the new, and felt ' How hard it is to *be* a Christian ! '

At the beginning of my second year the Synod was able to appoint an evangelist at Sāgara, a western town where no Christian



## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

lived, and my born-Brāhman friend **Sāgara** was appointed. It was the home of the recent convert. He came, and said he wished to go with the evangelist as colporteur, knowing I was anxious to secure one, so that a man need not be alone. I asked him if he were able to bear his mother's curse. He said he could face everything, and wished most earnestly to go. I was not sure if a man ought to pass through such an ordeal as I knew must face him; but after much thought and prayer I sent them both together. On the night they reached Sāgara, the family of the newly-appointed colporteur were performing his 'gata shrāddhe' (i.e. the burning ceremony for one who has fallen from Caste, who is mourned over more than the naturally dead). They had great difficulty in getting any house; the only one they could secure was the home of cobras, in which no one would live. The

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

cobras hung from the bamboos of the roof, hissing at each other. When the evangelist broke the back of one and threw it outside, the people cried out that he was hurting a god. The colporteur had the boys crying out after him, 'Have they not burned you to-night?' He bore all bravely, and did his work well. After a while the old life asserted itself; he grew restless, and wished to live in another place. At length he joined the police force, and kept his Christian name. How much of anxiety it meant to enter into and share such soul-struggles!

The Brāhman Street was close beside the river, and was, I think, **Brāh-**  
**mans** one of the best. There seemed to be a certain spirit in the Brāhmans of Shimoga which won deep regard. The influence of the Brāhman ideal was powerful there. I learned to know many of them, and cherish the memory of their friendship. There was a small Sanskrit school the

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

teacher of which was a Mādhava Brāhman of the elder type, who most worthily sustained the traditions of his Caste. It was a pleasure to hear the pupils recite, but the teaching methods seemed very strange. There was a ' Sāstri ' (i.e. one who knows the scripture as command) who had learned deep reverence for the Lord Jesus, studied the Gospels carefully, and persuaded many others to do so. Some of his Caste called him the ' Pādre ' (i.e. missionary). He did not openly become a Christian, but the influence he exerted among his own people was remarkable.

**Chris-  
tian  
thought  
coarse**      The Commissioner was a Smārta Brāhman, of forceful personality, of insight, and gifted in many ways.

A series of English translations of the Sacred Books was then issued by Brāhmans for the use of Brāhmans alone who could not read Sanskrit. The former apathy in regard to the influence of Chris-

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

tian scriptures was gone. There was a determined purpose to learn the best of their own scriptures in order to resist the foreign scripture. The Commissioner kept a Sāstri, who read the Sanskrit original while he read the English. One day the Sāstri called at my study, and said he wished to know all about our religious thought. I told him that if he wished to learn our religious thought as philosophy or for reasoning, he must learn a few languages, and study their literature. He was quite prepared to do that, as if it were a little thing. Then we talked about our scriptures, and when I said that if he wished to learn our way of redemption it meant the conviction of personal sin, and seeking deliverance from it in faithful obedience to our Lord Jesus, he hissed out, 'Your way of thought is too coarse for words.' The old man within me prompted retort, but I tried to learn deeper meekness.

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

The Sessions Judge was a Mād-  
**Is there** hava Brāhman. We had many talks  
**Unity at**  
**Root?** together in his bungalow and in my  
study. Once, in my study, he said  
he would like to talk with me as an English  
gentleman not as a missionary. I feared  
the two could hardly be severed, but said  
I would try. He said, ' Do you not really  
think that at root all religions are one ?  
that beneath many varying forms arising  
in different countries and after distinctive  
culture, yet in the root there is unity ?  
May we not say there is so much that is  
common between yours and ours that there  
should be no hostility or contradiction ? '  
I pleaded for consideration of such a large  
theme, and tried to point out how much it  
meant. Then he said, ' Do you think there  
is any radical contradiction between your  
scripture and ours in regard to the real  
heart-worship of God ? ' I asked if he  
would point out any passage in their scrip-

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

ture which absolutely forbade the worship of God as a Spirit by means of material forms as unworthy of God and debasing to men. • He replied that I could not think God would reject the worship of a man so trained from childhood, and who could only approach the Unseen that way. I suggested that was hardly the point in trying to study the unity or difference of scriptures. Did he know such a prohibition? Then he replied, 'Ah! there you talk as a missionary.' I felt he talked as a Brāhman, and how hard it was to reach the man within the man; yet we talked on, and I tried then, as always, to emphasize the sense of moral failure in presence of our own ideal, and our need of inward renewal.

There was an elderly Brāhman with whom I often talked. Once he called, bringing with him a student just home from Sringeri.

Has it not  
come  
into his  
hands?

I was trying alone to read some verses

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

of the Rig Véda, and the book lay open on my desk. I pointed to a verse, and asked the student if he would be good enough to read it for me. With a look of horror, he said, 'That sacrilege can never be.' He would never let the holy sounds fall from his lips on unpurged ears. The elder looked on in anguish, and lifting up both hands, cried out as if in real pain, 'Has not the Holy Book come into his hands?' Our talk had to turn away from the Véda that time.

A 'Sabhā,' or congregation as we should say, used to meet at that time by invitation at the Commissioner's bungalow, to discuss the meaning of the Sacred Books. Teachers of the three Brāhman Castes attended regularly to expound, to criticize, and to defend their several interpretations of Scripture. The Sessions Judge and Commissioner called upon me one day

**Threat to  
cast out  
Sastri.**

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

together. As we talked, the 'sabhā' was mentioned, and I was asked if I would attend. 'Gladly,' I said, 'but I do not think your people will suffer my presence when the Vēda is read.' They both felt I did not value their influence with their people at its real worth, and said so energetically. I said I was sorry even to seem to undervalue it, but felt only too sure they would never agree to my presence. The meeting was to be on a Saturday. On the Friday evening the Commissioner called, to express his great regret that he could not get them to agree to my being present. His own Caste, the Smārtas, were willing, but the Mādhavas would not hear of it. After much persuasion they had secured the consent of their chief, the master of the Sanskrit School, and he promised he would try to secure the consent of his Caste. Next morning he awoke the household by saying they would put him out of Caste if



## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

he agreed to that 'Pādre' being there. Teacher and leader as he was, he could not face that threat. I think my friend had not quite grasped all the force of obstruction there. He regretted it, and I certainly did deeply. The next week, in a Brāhman friend's house, I met the Brāhman who cried out because I possessed the Vēda. I asked him how the discussion went on the Saturday. All went smoothly, but why didn't I favour them with my presence? Feeling sure he was one who would oppose my invitation, I said, 'You are so supremely holy that my shadow would have defiled you.' 'Words of Scripture,' he said reverently, 'can only be spoken to those who have the right to hear.' 'Was — there?' I asked. 'Yes.' 'He is a Sudra in Caste, though high in Government service?' 'Yes.' 'What is the penalty appointed for speaking the words of scripture in his ears?' His face was a study,

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

astute and self-controlled as he was. 'It ought not to be,' he said several times. 'Was ——— there?' 'Yes.' 'He is a heretic, though Assistant-Commissioner?' 'Yes.' 'What is the penalty for reciting the Vēda in his ears?' He looked me through and through as I said, 'There is no penalty appointed; that sin can never be expiated.' I then reminded him of the Vēda he had seen in my study, and said I meant to learn it as far as possible.

A Brāhman who held the highest honours of Madras University was a good type of the student who uses Western education to defend the ancestral faith. Once he said, 'You know such a boys' school. There is a girl there who is very intelligent, and could be trained if opportunity were given. Could you receive her into your own girls' school?' I asked her Caste, and then said, 'Where would she live in town?'

**Better if  
Outcastes  
became  
Christians**

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

‘ Among her own Caste, of necessity.’  
‘ What would happen if I suggested she should attend the Brāhman girls’ school ? ’  
‘ Ah ! ’ he exclaimed, and I had to say,  
‘ You know, every father who values his Caste would take away his girl from any school to which she might be sent.’ ‘ Yes, I know.’ ‘ Would her mother consent to her being received into one of our boarding schools ? ’ ‘ That would mean becoming a Christian. No ; she would rather die than suffer that.’ As we talked together, he pondered the difficulty which arises when you really try to raise one out of the conditions of Caste, and he said, ‘ I think it would be a good thing if the lower Castes and Outcastes could become Christians.’

On the western hills facing Shi-  
**Unreached** moga Mission House one could dis-  
**Circuit** cern the far-spreading forests. The evening star was so clear it could be seen shining through the trees and dipping be-



*Photo by Rev. A. E. Nightingale.*

**A Holy Bathing-Place.**



*Photo by Rev. A. E. Nightingale.*

**A Western Forest Scene.**

[Face page 108.]



## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

hind the hill. In those parts of my circuit we had no evangelist, and there was no possibility of regular visits for teaching. At every point work was urgent and clamorous, but though we all did our utmost, it was hopelessly beyond our power to compass it. I used to look across the west, and pray that God would work in the hearts of men whom we were quite unable to reach. Everything one did seemed but to show how vastly more was undone.

But my whole self was given in hardest work to the Normal Normal  
School students. There were twenty of them. I felt it would be of little avail to teach them theories of teaching. They would teach in imitation of the method in which they were taught. So I taught them three hours a day, five days a week, and crowded my circuit journeys into the nights and days remaining, so as to cause the least possible disturbance to their studies.

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

Usually it was considered absolutely necessary to do receptive work during the hottest part of the day. I taught them in Kanarese, never a word of English, with nothing but tiles to shield us from the sun. Text-books were a great difficulty. We had no satisfactory commentary on the New Testament in Kanarese. The Second Catechism was translated, but had then been learned. If there was to be efficient teaching, the preparation of text-books was a prime necessity. I wrote an explanatory translation of St. John's Gospel, with notes, and an adaptation of W. B. Pope's *Higher Catechism* for the seniors. For the juniors I began an Historical Scripture Catechism; I translated into Kanarese the Bombay Government First and Second Sanskrit-English Books, with fuller exercises, and part of Paul Bert's *First Year of Scientific Knowledge*. My students had to copy my manuscript; I could not print as the work went

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

on. The response of those students was, and is, one of the greatest blessings of my life. I felt if they were to be true teachers, the Lord Jesus Himself must become the centre-force of personality, so I asked if they were quite willing to learn one verse of His words every day, and repeat the seven for each week on the Sunday. They agreed gladly, and every Sunday evening I was at home we all met together after service, and each repeated his seven verses. I tried to work so that preaching or visiting schools should not be lessened. Many a time I had to force myself when the need for rest was more clamorous than usual. More than once I taugt half-lying down, because pain would not suffer me to stand.



## VI

‘Whoso suffers most hath most to gīve.’

At the end of July, 1889, we went  
**Illness** from Shimoga to visit evangelists  
and schools, and preach on the  
eastern side of the circuit. When forty  
miles away from home, the west wind, for  
which I had so often wished as the breath  
of life, caused me to shiver. We reached  
Harihara after dark. During the night  
violent internal pain seized me, and I was  
helpless. There was a hospital assistant  
ten miles away, who was sent for. He  
said I had severe congestion of liver, and  
advised going into Bangalore for treatment.  
A fortnight afterwards the Southern Mah-  
ratta Railway was opened to Bangalore,  
and I was saved the fatigue and pain of  
one hundred and twenty miles’ journey by

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

bullock-cart. We hoped that with medical treatment and the drier climate it would soon be possible to resume work, but we never returned to Shimoga. The doctor said I was suffering from neurasthenia and hepatitis, and ordered me home at once. I pleaded for my work, broken in the midst, and begged that something might be tried where I was. But they spoke, very decisively. 'No ; home or ——'

When I was carried aboard ship, my faithful servant, who had been with me on most of my journeys during the seven years, said with tears that he hoped I should soon be well and return. He would look out for me, and be glad to live with us again. They helped me on deck, to lie down there, day by day. The charm and freshness of the sea lessened my pain, and I was able to walk the deck's length when we reached the Mediterranean, and began to hope ; but when we had

Home-  
ward

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

landed, and the first excitement was over, I had constant pain, and fainted several times every day ; also always if I attempted any short walk. For three years I lay in utter powerlessness, with pain that knew no ease. There was no sleep ; or if, when I could bear no more, sleep came in the early morning, within half an hour I would awake, teaching or preaching in Kanarese, or shuddering with frightful dreams. In the depression of those days the outlook was too dark even for despair.

**Struggle  
for  
Strength** After three years I began to meet a class for religious fellowship in our home, and visited the sick and poor. In the fifth year I began, trembling, to preach in English once a week. There was perpetual pain of mind as I preached ; I had grown to feel far more at home with Kanarese than English, and the comparison always included a reference to the work left undone in the Mysore. The physician

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

would not suffer me to attempt the night exposure of travelling after preaching, so there came seven years of country charges in Scotland as one's only hope of gaining back something of health. Sometimes I [ hoped strength enough to return to the Mysore would be given, but the physician said that must not enter my dreams. Then I hoped for sufficient vigour to study and work up to the limit of my desire at home, but pain has seldom been far away, and nerve weakness has always been ready to warn.

Through the years I look back upon that seven years' experiment, **Looking** only fairly begun when it was **Back** broken, and left unfinished. It seemed as if I were just gaining insight and sympathy enough to do effective work in bringing the mind of Christ to the minds of men, and then all that I gained was thrust aside, as if seemingly useless. Do the

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

conclusions I reached in Mysore stand the test of all the thought which years of pain have brought ? I still feel that change of dress in Mysore hinders the real work of reaching the hearts of the Kanarese people. Caste is birth, it cannot be assumed. If native food alone be eaten, it will lower vitality and render work at European standards impossible ; yet I would not eat beef or pork. It is possible that fasting and rigorous abstinence such as I tried may so weaken a man working to the limit of his strength, that there may be grave peril to his life ; yet I would live as simply and frugally as possible for health and efficient service. Religion is not meat and drink, not anything outward ; but the mind of Christ. If the religion of Jesus became a Caste ! The moral and spiritual quality of personality will count here. The ideal man of the Védic faiths is the Sādhū—the meek, gentle, gracious man who has conquered

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

desire so that he may be helpful. 'The gentle are kind even to despicable animals. Does the moon withhold light from Outcaste huts?' 'He who is gentle to the helpful, what virtue has his gentleness? He who is gentle to the hurtful, he alone is gentle, so the wise affirm.' In the ferment of faiths and civilizations, in the midst of conflicting ideals, the meek, gentle, self-sacrificing goodness of Jesus appeals to the heart of Brāhman and Outcaste, in spite of the differences and failure of those who bear His name. The deepest question of all to me is—How far was I Christlike in spirit in the toil and testing of those seven years? May merits not be weighed, offences pardoned? Out of all the years of pain there has grown the certainty that he who would help to uplift men must have as much of the mind of Christ as God can give to those who count all loss to gain Christlikeness.

Was it worth while to live and labour

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

**Was it** thus, and to suffer through doing  
**worth** so? If measured by gain or  
**while?** health, it was all loss. But if we  
measure 'by the wine poured forth, not by  
the wine drank,' if the Cross of our Saviour  
be the symbol of the Spirit that is evolving  
goodness in the race of man, it was the loss  
that alone is gain. •

**Silence** There was an ancient sage who  
**and** retired to the forest, and lived in  
**Truth** study there till the Divine and  
Eternal so grew upon his thought that he  
felt all words could speak no more. He  
lived in solitary silence, pondering the  
Ineffable. Another sage, anxious to gain  
the true knowledge of the Supreme Reality  
that leads man to his goal, came to him in  
the forest as a disciple, and earnestly begged  
to be taught the Supreme Reality. The  
sage continued silent. At length the dis-  
ciple said, 'I begged to be taught, and you  
utter never a word.' Then the teacher said,

## IN THE BRĀHMANS' HOLY LAND

‘ I am teaching all the time in the only true way, but you do not understand.’ The disciple felt, too, that the deepest and highest devotion is dumb in the presence of the Divine, which is above all speech and thought. Yet the Divine Law says, ‘ Truth is better than silence.’

•  
Lead us from the unreal to the Real,  
Lead us from darkness to light,  
Lead us from death to deathless life.



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